

The Nebraska Stockman Section of The Alliance Herald

Monthly Stockmen's Edition

The matter contained in this section of The Alliance Herald was prepared for the Nebraska Stockman. On account of the two papers being issued from the press of the Herald Publishing Company, we are able in this way to give readers of The Herald an interesting monthly stockmen's edition without extra charge to them.

The Nebraska Stockman is devoted to the live stock interests of the state, with special reference to the ranch country. In addition to matter bearing directly on the live stock industry, it will have attractive features each month that will make it interesting to every person who wishes to learn more about the great state of Nebraska. The subscription price is 50 cents per year.

HERALD PUBLISHING COMPANY,
Alliance, Nebr.

THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 1916

IMPROVED LIVE STOCK ASS'N

In the December issue of The Nebraska Stockman, we published an editorial on "Improvement in Live Stock," in which we strongly advocated the organizing of a live stock improvement association in this part of the west and suggested that it be called the Western Nebraska Live Stock Improvement Association.

At a swine breeders' and dairy-men's meeting, held recently in Scottsbluff, preliminary arrangements were made, in line with the recommendations contained in the above mentioned editorial, to organize a live stock association to be known as the North Platte Valley Improved Live Stock Association. Another meeting will be held to perfect the organization. In mentioning this organization, the Reclamation Record says: "The valley is very much in need of such an organization, and all live stock men in the valley are invited to join and help make the association a great success. There are a number of matters that can be taken up thru such an organization to improve live stock conditions in the valley."

What the Reclamation Record says is true, but why not make the association for western Nebraska, instead of for only a part of it? This paper has been pointing out and emphasizing lately the importance of co-operation between the ranchmen, farmers and business men of this part of the state, the irrigated valley, the unirrigated farming and dairy upland, and the ranch country. Co-operation would be beneficial to all, and we believe that it would be much better for an association organized to promote improvement in the breeding of live stock in this country to cover all sections, instead of only one.

As The Nebraska Stockman has quite a number of readers now that it did not have last December, and as the above mentioned editorial contained information and suggestions that are timely and to which attention may properly be called the second time, we print it again, as follows:

About five years ago the Nebraska Improved Live Stock Breeders' Association was incorporated. The following organizations are auxiliary to it: Nebraska Horse Breeders' Association, Nebraska Swine Breeders' Association, Nebraska Short-Horn

Breeders' Association, Nebraska Hereford Breeders' Association, Nebraska Aberdeen Angus Breeders' Association, Nebraska Red Polled Breeders' Association, Nebraska Sheep Breeders' Association, and Nebraska Dairy Cattle Breeders' Association. Jefferson county, of which Fairbury is the county seat, has the Jefferson County Live Stock Improvement Association.

It is an old saying which everybody believes to be true that he who makes two blades of grass to grow where one grew before is a public benefactor. It must be true, also, that the man or the men who improve the breed of the animals to which the blades of grass are fed are doing a good stunt for the public as well as for themselves.

The above named associations have been a benefit to their members in particular and to the live stock interests of the state in general; but their work is principally, if not entirely, in the eastern and central portions of the state. Why not organize the Western Nebraska Live Stock Improvement Association? There are several ways in which such an association would be beneficial to its members, by securing co-operative action that cannot be easily secured without organization.

Nebraska ranch cattle have a fine reputation as desirable stockers and feeders in the corn belt country, but there is room for improvement. There is a good demand from the feeder buyers of eastern Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois and states farther east for Nebraska sand hill cattle, but it is possible to strengthen this demand, with the result that prices will be increased accordingly. Proper co-operation among ranchmen will not only materially assist in improving breeds, but will help to give tone to the reputation of the stuff shipped from the grass to market.

For many years after western Nebraska became a strong factor in cattle production, not many hogs were raised in this country; but for several years past more attention has been paid to this branch of the live stock industry with the result that the number of hogs raised and shipped is constantly on the increase. This is true of the upland portion as well as the irrigated country along the North Platte river. The number of car loads of hogs shipped out of the eleven counties comprising the panhandle of Nebraska, during the past year, would no doubt surprise most people who have given the matter no investigation. We have no statistics at hand showing the percentage of increase annually, but we venture to predict that the number will be doubled within the next few years. Certainly there is need of co-operation among the hog raisers, as this branch of the live stock industry of western Nebraska increases. The time may come when the hog men of this country will want an organization of their own, but for the present we believe their interests can be conserved in an organization with the cattle men.

No need to tell horse raisers and buyers that there is need of improving breeds. They know it too well for their own satisfaction. A market for inferior horses at anything like a decent price is a thing of the past. Cheap automobiles have helped to knock out a class of horses that formerly brought a living price—and the automobiles are getting cheaper all the while. There never was a time when the improvement of horse flesh was more needed in this country than now, and effective organization will greatly assist in bringing about the desired results.

The Nebraska Stockman would like to hear from live stock raisers on the subject of organizing the Western Nebraska Live Stock Improvement Association. If such an organization shall be formed, some person or persons must take the initiative. It could be made to cover much or little territory, as might be desired by the promoters, but we suggest that to begin with it be made to include that portion of the state that may properly be termed western Nebraska, without attaching any northwestern or southwestern to it,

the part lying north of Colorado which in recent years is often spoken of as the panhandle of Nebraska, and comprising approximately 15,000 square miles. We suggest, also, that be made to include breeders of cattle, hogs and horses, later organizing auxiliary associations if desired.

OBITUARY

On April 13th, the editor was summoned by telegram to Lincoln, on account of the critical illness of his mother, one of the best women ever permitted to live in this world, whose demise, at the age of nearly eighty-seven years, while not unexpected, brought sadness to many hearts. The following contains part of the sketch of her life which was read at the funeral service:

Caroline Creighton was born June 1829, in Belmont county, Ohio; died April 13, 1916, in Lincoln, Nebraska. On Sept. 14, 1847, she was married to James Thomas, at the home of her parents, near Seneca, Guernsey county, Ohio. Her husband, who is past ninety-one years old and who has lived during the lifetime of every president of the United States, except George Washington, survives her.

To them were born ten children, seven sons and three daughters, of whom five are now living: E. A. Thomas, Abingdon, Ill.; H. B. Thomas, Seneca, Mo.; Mrs. J. G. Beeler, North Platte, Nebr.; John W. Thomas, Alliance, Nebr.; Mrs. Mary T. Gould, Lincoln, Nebr. Their grandchildren number thirty-five and their great-grandchildren the same.

In 1856 they removed from Ohio to Illinois, making the journey in a wagon. In 1886 they came from Abingdon, Ill. to Nebraska, locating at Orleans. For the last eight years they have resided in Lincoln.

The deceased was converted March 1, 1851, and ever after was an earnest Christian worker. Her life was marked with strong faith in God and humble and cheerful submission to His will.

She was an invalid for three years preceding her death, altho bedfast only a part of the time. Her last days on earth were a time of wonderful spiritual triumph, leaving a testimony to divine grace that none could doubt. On the day preceding her death, realizing that she was nearing the close of life, she said: "I am sweeping thru the gates to the New Jerusalem. My trust is in the Lord. It is nothing that I have done; it is all thru Jesus."

To her relatives and a large circle of friends she has left the heritage of her saintly influence, which will be to them a benediction forever. To remember her is to think of and reverence her God and Savior. Her bereaved husband, who has added to the weight of more than ninety-one years the load of the deepest sorrow of his life, exclaims, "Never has there a better woman lived."

The memory of her is "as incense poured forth." "Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her."

ELIMINATING THE "MIDDLEMEN"

The time was when farmers and their families wore homemade clothes, manufactured from homespun cloth; made their own butter and cheese, took wheat and corn to mill and brot back their grist of flour and meal, butchered hogs and cattle to supply their tables with pork and beef, tanned hides into leather and employed the village cobbler to make boots and shoes for the family, made their own tallow candles to light their houses at night, and in many other ways supplied themselves with the necessities of life without patronizing merchants or agents. In those good old days the middleman was pretty effectively eliminated.

But under our present system of industry and commerce the middleman is an absolute necessity. How to decrease the costs intervening between producer and consumer is a proper question for careful consideration,

but efforts to "eliminate the middleman" in these times are, in almost all cases, impracticable.

Even when by organization into co-operative associations for the purpose of buying goods and selling products, farmers or other persons endeavor to eliminate the middlemen in their transactions, they do not succeed, for the reason that it is necessary to employ an agent or manager; and sometimes it happens that thru incompetency of the person so employed the members of the association find that the cost of the middleman is greater to them in the long run than it would have been if they had done their buying and selling thru the usual channels of business.

The expenses that come between producers and consumers are, in many instances, too high, and in some cases very much so. How to reduce those costs is a proper subject for consideration. Since writing the above, we have read an editorial in The Nebraska Farmer "Middlemen" that expresses our sentiments further. This subject is of such importance and of such general interest that we reprint it, as follows:

Middlemen

The current expression that there are too many middlemen may mean that the number of classes of middlemen is too great or that each class contains too many. A distinction should be made. To say that wholesale houses and traveling men are unnecessary is very different from saying that a town has too many grocers. One suggests the elimination of whole classes of middlemen, of steps in marketing, while the other suggests the reduction of the number of middlemen in one class. Our belief, based upon observation and investigations that have been made, is that abuses in the marketing system are more likely to be the result of monopoly at some point or of too many middlemen in some class or classes than of too many successive steps.

Investigations seem to show that attempts to eliminate classes of middlemen, or to cut out established steps in marketing, do not usually meet with large success. The bureau of markets in the department of agriculture after studying the marketing of fruits came to the conclusion that the successive steps—commission men, wholesale buyers, jobbers and retail merchants—were all necessary, and that where abuses exist they may best be remedied not by discarding the machinery, but by growers, through co-operation, taking control of as much of it as is necessary.

Direct buying and selling, insofar as they are practicable, serve as valuable checks upon the marketing system, but they do not seem likely to eliminate classes of middlemen or reduce the number of steps in marketing the bulk of the produce and goods. By parcel post and other forms of direct marketing, some produce may be sold direct to consumers, but doubtless the bulk of it will continue to travel the usual route. Some across-lots sales of grain can be made, often very advantageously, but most of the grain will continue to move through the exchanges. When abuses arise, the fundamental remedy is just what the bureau of markets pointed out to the fruit growers—control of marketing agencies by the producers themselves.

Not for a moment would we leave the impression that we think any part of the present system of marketing too sacred to touch. But we do believe that any plans looking toward the elimination of steps should be made only after the most careful study to learn whether the new arrangement is likely to be cheaper and more efficient than the old. Up to this time, marketing studies seem to indicate strongly that attempts to eliminate any of the well established steps are quite as likely to result in